

Ratisbon and Worms, where vain efforts were made to restore the broken unity of the Church, and where Calvin, unable to understand German, must have felt himself straggly out of place, in the glittering environment of the Dicts. There he met Melancthon, with whom he established a deep and lasting friendship, as is witnessed by their correspondence. At Strasburg he found his wife, Idelette de Bures, a Dutch woman, widow of a converted Anabaptist preacher, with whom he lived for nine years in the happiest union, as is plain from his letters; and who bore him one son, who died in infancy.

His powers now were full grown, his eye scanned the whole horizon, his name was known in all the churches and still he never forgot Geneva. When Cardinal Sadolet craftily tried to win the Genevese back to Rome, Calvin, who wrote "that he loved Geneva not less than his own soul," entered the lists and completely silenced the tempter, winning by the effort the deepest regard of his antagonist.

Meanwhile the moral condition of Geneva became more chaotic day by day. Here and there voices were raised in favor of Calvin's return, the cry grew in volume; it became universal and irresistible. Three times the Council endeavored in vain to move Calvin to resume his work in Geneva. They appealed to the Swiss cities and to Strasburg. At the fourth call Calvin yielded. His stay in Strasburg had been his final schooling, his true life-work now lay before him. This decision was the greatest crisis in his life; he stood the test and resolutely turned his face to the future. But he did it with a full understanding of the gravity of the task, and with a breaking heart; for in Farel's letter on the subject he speaks of "offering his bleeding heart as a sacrifice to God." These words created the device of the seal, which is found on the title page of most of his works—a hand, uplifting a bleeding, burning heart to Heaven.

The die was now cast and Calvin, leaving his wife and household goods at Strasburg, at once followed the messengers of the Council to Geneva.

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In commenting on the extensive preparations that are in progress in the Southern Presbyterian Church for celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, a correspondent of the New York Observer says of the Church: "There is probably no more earnest and consistent body of adherents to Calvin's system of theology and principles of church government." This is a tribute that we may modestly accept and heartily cherish. While the Church has never in any way adopted Calvin's teachings as authoritative or become sponsor for him as an expositor or theologian, it believes, with remarkable unanimity, that the system which he expounded as containing and comprehending an orderly statement of revealed truth, is the bulwark of vital godliness; that the cardinal elements of this system are inseparable from evangelical religion and that the triumph of the kingdom must come ultimately through the acceptance and operation of the Pauline-Calvinistic doctrine of the sovereignty of grace in the salvation of guilty, helpless souls.

For Presbyterian of the South.

AFFLICTION.

By S. Addison McElroy, D. D.

I sat in darkness,
Not a ray of light shone o'er my path
To guide my wand'ring feet to peace and rest.
The night had gathered all her gloomy force,
The tempest raged. The thunder roared aloud.
Fierce lightnings flashed, and cloud on cloud arose
And roaring winds tore through the blackened gloom,
And e'en the earth was trembling 'neath my feet.
Alone! alone! I knew not where to go.

Oh! who can tell the heart's wild agony
When thus, alone, it treads the path of life
Amid the terrors that beset the way?
How feeble is its cry, there in the gloom?
And who can hear, and who can pity lend?
Where is the hand outstretched to help and save?
And yet it cries—a feeble, trembling cry—
To Him who seems so careless of our fate.
Where is thy God? and yet no other hope
Comes, in that hour of untold agony.
So with a wild despair it cries aloud.

The voice seems throttled by the raging storm,
E'er it is borne into the inky night
But, through the gloom, it rises, like a flash,
Up to the listening ear of God on high:
And from His lips, a still small voice is heard—
"Tis I: be not afraid. I hold the winds.
I guide the storm. I clothe the earth and thee
In darkness or in light, as I may choose.
Thy life is in my care, I am thy God.
The storm is but to make thee turn to me.
Trust, weary one. The wings of love are round thee
And thou art not far from home."

Then, from the gloom, the hand of faith is reached
And clasps God's hand of love. The tempest lulls,
The dawn breaks forth and floods the eastern sky
With joy and hope and love and trust serene.
The very clouds glow in the living light,
With colors manifold and harmony
No artist's brush could catch, nor mortal thought
Conceive, until they spread before the wond'ring eye
The mighty power that unto us hath given
A foretaste of eternal joy in heaven.
Lancaster, Texas.

A SIMPLE ORDINANCE.

There has been very much written on the Mode of Baptism. There is one point I wish to make that I do not remember ever to have seen.

There are two ordinances under the old Testament—Circumcision and the Passover. Under the New Testament, there are also two—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Under each dispensation one is a prerequisite to the other. No one who has not been circumcised was permitted to eat the passover. Under the New Testament dispensation, no one unbaptized, can lawfully eat of the Lord's Supper.

There can be no circumstances under which the Lord's Supper can not be administered, provided you can procure the necessary elements, bread and wine, sufficient for the occasion. How about Baptism, the necessary prerequisite ordinance? Would the Lord, in His wisdom, institute two ordinances in His Church, one of which is not of as simple and easy administration as the other? If the proper mode is sprinkling, there is no trouble. The element, water, can always be had and there is no time, no place, no condition of health when it cannot be administered. How about immersion? There are conditions when it is utterly impracticable.

God often uses the afflictive dispensations of His prov-